

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.

**Rick Scott**

Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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BEST BABY GIFT IS ON-TIME VACCINATIONS

LEE COUNTY— The best gift a parent or guardian can give a baby is on-time vaccinations during this New Year, reports the Florida Department of Health in Lee County, as several vaccine-preventable illnesses are re-emerging and making children very ill.

Giving babies the recommended immunizations by age two is the best way to protect the baby from 14 serious diseases, like measles and whooping cough. The recommended childhood immunization schedule is designed to protect infants and children early in life when they are most vulnerable.

Vaccines have prevented the majority of children and adults from experiencing the devastating effects of diseases like polio, measles or whooping cough (pertussis). Despite that children in Florida can and do get these diseases. Outbreaks can and do occur when children aren't completely vaccinated.

"Vaccines today are the safest they have ever been in the United State's history," said Kim Wester, DOH-Lee immunizations manager. "Before vaccines are given to children they are tested extensively. As new information and recommendations are available, vaccines are updated."

Wester encourages all parents to make and keep a New Year's Resolution to get their babies vaccinated on schedule.

"The best gifts any parent can give their infant and toddler are vaccinations on the recommended schedule," said Wester.

The DOH-Lee immunization clinic is open from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Friday from 1-3:30 p.m. It is located at the main office 3920 Michigan Avenue, Fort Myers. All children's vaccinations are free. Vaccines are also available for children through their primary care provider.

For more information go to www.leechd.com.

The Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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Florida Department of Health

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